



CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Update of Lodi's Request to the San Joaquin Council of Governments to Appoint a Member of the Lodi City Council to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

MEETING DATE: September 5, 2007

PREPARED BY: City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive an update on the response to the City of Lodi's request for an appointment to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission owns, operates, and is the policy-making body for the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE). The Rail Commission is governed by an eight-member Board of Directors appointed by S.J. Council of Governments. Currently, the Rail Commission is comprised of representatives from Tracy, Lathrop, Manteca, Ripon, Stockton, San Joaquin County, Alameda County, and BART. Although Jack Sieglock served on the Rail Commission as a representative of the Board of Supervisors, there is currently no representation from the Fourth District. Lodi and Escalon are presently unrepresented on the Rail Commission.

Building upon the success of the ACE commuter train, the Regional Rail Commission is exploring the development of a commuter train to serve the Merced-Stockton-Sacramento corridor.

Recognizing the significances to Lodi of a Merced-Stockton-Sacramento commuter train, the City Council unanimously adopted a resolution on February 21, 2007 requesting that Mayor Johnson be appointed to the Regional Rail Commission. COG's Executive Committee considered Lodi's request and provided the attached response. The Executive Committee took no formal action, but did not respond favorably to Lodi's request.

In July, Mayor Johnson, Councilmember Hansen, City staff, and Supervisor Vogel met with COG staff, Director of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission Ms. Mortenson, and members of the Rail Commission. At that time, the Rail Commission stated its objections to Lodi's proposal and an alternative proposal to have all jurisdictions in the County have an appointment on the Rail Commission.

The Rail Commission is concerned that the size of the Rail Commission will cause the Commission to be unwieldy and appointments from individual cities will cause people to act provincially and not regionally.

APPROVED: _____
Blair King, City Manager

Staff has researched the composition of various public transit agencies that provide rail commuter service and finds that there is no universal size or composition.

Informal discussion has been held with representatives from the City of Escalon. Informally, they have indicated support for a proposal that would have representation from all cities in San Joaquin County on the Rail Commission.

In conclusion, the point of this issue at this time is to discuss current status and possible next steps.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The most direct fiscal impact to Lodi at this time is via funding to the Commission by San Joaquin COG. Approximately 40 percent of Rail Commission's funding comes from COG.

Blair King, City Manager

Attachment

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: City of Lodi Request for Seat on the
Regional Rail Commission

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Direction

DISCUSSION:

At their February 21, 2007 meeting the City of Lodi City Council voted unanimously to request that Mayor Bob Johnson be appointed to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission from the City of Lodi. The Council recognized that there is no vacancy on the Regional Rail Commission but requested this action believing that decisions regarding future rail operations to the Sacramento area are crucial to the City of Lodi and that the city should have a voice in the decision making.

San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission Board Composition

There are six members of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission and two additional members who vote on issues of a multi-county basis regarding ACE service. This is defined in the Joint Powers Agreement approved by all jurisdictions within San Joaquin County. The six members of the Commission are appointed by the San Joaquin Council of Governments. The only limitation is that these members must be elected city council members or county supervisors. There are no other restrictions. The COG Board could approve two or three or four members from one jurisdiction if it believed this best represented the interests of the Regional Rail Commission. The COG Board has adopted a practice and that is to appoint at least one member from the Stockton City Council (Councilmember Steve Bestolarides) and one from the County Board of Supervisors (Supervisor Larry Ruhstaller). Lathrop, Manteca and Tracy have also been given great consideration in recent years because of the proximity of the two south county stations. Besides Mr. Bestolarides and Mr. Ruhstaller, the remaining four members are Mayor Kristy Sayles of Lathrop, Councilmember John Harris of Manteca, Councilmember Mike Restuccia of Ripon, and Mayor Brent Ives of Tracy. There are no representatives from the City of Escalon or the City of Lodi councils on the Regional Rail Commission.

As the SJCOG Board recently discussed at some length, the appointment of a Regional Rail Commission member is a SJCOG Board decision. The appointment is not "from" a city council, and the appointment is not meant to have the elected official "represent" that City

Council. They are to represent the interests of the traveling public and the citizenry of San Joaquin County interested in effective rail transit service delivery and management. While this is an accurate characterization of the ideal role played by a Commissioner, the Commission members also choose what interests they wish to pursue, emphasize and advocate for as Commissioners.

*Prepared by: Andrew T. Chesley, Executive Director
M:\staff\rpt\2007\April\Exec. Com.\executive committee composition*



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CITIES OF
ESCALON,
LATHROP,
LODI,
MANTECA,
RIPON,
STOCKTON,
TRACY,
AND
THE COUNTY OF
SAN JOAQUIN

May 24, 2007

Mayor Bob Johnson
City of Lodi
P.O. Box 3006
Lodi, CA 95241-1910

Honorable Mayor Bob Johnson:

The San Joaquin Council of Governments received your letter of March and had a long discussion at our Executive Committee meeting. While the San Joaquin Council of Governments Executive Committee took no formal action, I was asked to make the following points to you regarding the question of an appointment to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission from the City of Lodi City Council.

- There are no designated seats on the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission for any of the jurisdictions which are signatories to the Joint Powers Agreement.
- The appointment of a San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission member is to represent the best interests of the region as opposed to any one jurisdiction.
- The San Joaquin Council of Governments has the responsibility to appoint six, locally elected officials to the Commission. This means that at least two jurisdictions will not have an elected official serving on the Rail Commission at any given time.

To add a councilmember from the City of Lodi would require a change in the Joint Powers Agreement creating the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, or the replacement of an existing San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission member. The Executive Committee discussion indicated no interest in modifying the JPA at this time, nor a willingness to change the appointed members of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

The Council of Governments board must appoint the six members of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission. The ability of an appointee to represent the best interests of the region has been a paramount consideration. The Board has taken into consideration a number of other factors as well in selecting members. Interest in rail issues, interest in existing station locations, ridership from a community, participation

MAY 29 2007
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

in regional issues, and geographic distribution have been considerations. On that last point, the JPA creating the Rail Commission would allow the Council of Governments to appoint three members from say the Manteca City Council. The COG Board however has never appointed more than one member of a jurisdiction at a given time.

I can assure you that the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission is very aware of the concerns in the City of Lodi regarding any future expansion of service to the north and service to the City of Lodi. I can also assure you that the San Joaquin Council of Governments is also very much aware of this and that both organizations will assure that the interests of the City are a part of the decision making process on any future expansion of the service.

Recognizing your concerns may I suggest that a meeting with you, the Chair of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission and me as Chair of the Council of Governments to discuss your request further may be in order. There may be options we have yet to explore. I will ask Mr. Chesley of SJCOG staff to contact Lodi City Manager Blair King and Ms. Mortenson of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission to arrange a meeting of all of us. I hope this meets with your approval.

Sincerely yours,



JOHN W. HARRIS
Chair, San Joaquin Council of Governments

Cc: Blair King
Stacey Mortenson
Andrew Chesley
Mayor Brent Ives, Chair SJRRC

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City Attorney

February 22, 2007

Chairman John W. Harris
San Joaquin Council of Governments
555 East Weber Avenue
Stockton, California 95202

Dear Mr. Harris:

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT TO THE SAN JOAQUIN REGIONAL RAIL COMMISSION

At the February 1, 2007, meeting of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, the topic of expansion of commuter rail service in San Joaquin and adjacent counties was discussed. Prominent in the conversation was the consideration of passenger service up the Highway 99 Corridor, through the City of Lodi, and beyond.

The City of Lodi has a strong interest in seeing an expansion of commuter rail service through our community. Amtrak currently provides daily commuter service to points north and south. A multi-modal station tends to the needs of both rail and bus passengers simultaneously. A multi-story parking structure exists in prime location adjacent to our rail depot. Much of the needed infrastructure is already in place, and the City welcomes the opportunity to expand commuter services for residents of Lodi, as well as other potential passengers in the north County and foothill communities.

As the Rail Commission plans for this important expansion, it is vital that the City of Lodi be afforded a place at the table. Currently, neither the City of Lodi, nor the north County, has any representation on the Commission.

We respectfully request that the San Joaquin Council of Governments appoint, at its earliest convenience, a representative of the Lodi City Council to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

Thank you for your consideration of this most important matter.

Sincerely,



Bob Johnson
Mayor

C: File